

CODIB-D-111/1.5/6
17 November 1966

U N I T E D S T A T E S I N T E L L I G E N C E B O A R D
COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

Draft Final Report of Task Team V (Biographics)

- References:
- a. USIB-D-39.7/5, 16 March 1964
 - b. USIB-D-39.7/6, 6 May 1964
 - c. CODIB-D-111/1.5/3, 19 January 1965
 - d. T/V/W-1, 16 October 1965

A. Background

This report and the attached final report of CODIB Task Team V (Biographics) are forwarded pursuant to USIB direction. The attached final report was prepared by a task team chaired by a representative of CIA and participated in by representatives of DIA, State, Army, Navy, Air Force, NSA, FBI, Immigration and Naturalization Service (I&NS), Secret Service, and Civil Service Commission. The objective of Task Team V was to identify means for improving the storage, retrieval, and exchange of information from the major name files and related data files in the intelligence community. For each pertinent biographic file, the Task Team was charged with establishing its size, types of personalities covered, number of names searched daily, major requestors, methods of communicating requests and responses, data elements, file maintenance, and security classification.

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B. Summary of Task Team Findings

1. Types of Biographic Files

Biographic files are divided into three separate but overlapping areas: Counterintelligence (CI)--information on personalities who constitute a known or possible threat to national security; Positive Intelligence (PI)--information on personalities, usually foreign, who are of general interest to the intelligence community; and Security (S)--information used by activities in investigating and granting security clearances to individuals or organizations.

2. Uses of Biographic Files

Two basic uses are made of the three types of biographic files: Name Finding--searching the file to identify individuals from combinations of data elements other than name, e.g., age, position, location, organizational affiliation, occupation, military rank, and nationality; and Name Searching--search of indexes or files to determine if information exists on an individual or to validate basic information on an individual.

3. Indexes to Biographic Files

The biographic files studies by the Task Team are supported by individual indexes totaling approximately 172 million records. The indexes exist in the form of manual cards (3x5, 4x6, 5x7, and 5x8), punched cards, and magnetic tape. The combined indexes are growing at the rate of approximately 11 million records per

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4. Biographic Files Usage Rates

a. Approximately 30,000 requests for information from the biographic files and indexes are processed each day. About 50% of these requests are made between agencies; approximately one-half of these requests result in a "no-record" response. Ninety-three percent of all requests are in the Security and Counterintelligence areas. The 30,000 requests result in approximately 95,000 name searches per day. The combination of name searches and routine file maintenance results in approximately 161,000 transactions per day for the biographic files and indexes identified in the preceding paragraph.

b. On the basis of a sample survey of 3,000 typical routine requests in the Counterintelligence and Security areas at FBI, I&NS, Civil Service Commission, CIA, and Army, the Task Team observed an average response time of nine days with a range from 2 to 18 days. This time was measured from the day the request left the requesting agency to the day a response was received by the requesting agency. The time includes mail time, index searching by the responding agency, and analysis of files in the case of possible identifications. Based on informal observations by the Task Team, it appears that in the great majority of cases there is far more time spent processing these requests within the requesting agency than is spent in the nine days of external processing. It should also be noted that

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usually an agency must wait for responses from all agencies to which it sends a request before it initiates further action on a named individual. The average time before all responses are in is much more than nine days.

c. It is estimated that several thousand people are involved in biographic intelligence activities. Of this number, approximately one thousand (at an annual salary-only cost of \$5,000,000) are involved in the preparation, maintenance, and searching of major biographic indexes. The indexes themselves occupy approximately 100,000 square feet of floor space. Approximately \$500,000 is being spent annually for supplies and equipment to support and operate the indexes.

5. Improvements in Processing Biographic Information

a. The Task Team believes that improvements in the speed and quality of biographic information processing involving interagency exchange are necessary to improve security and afford policy makers and analysts better response from biographic intelligence files on foreign nationals of interest in the military, subversive, political, and scientific areas. The team believes that use of computer techniques and interagency telecommunications links may provide many needed improvements. The team does not discount, however, the complex problems and significant costs in making major changes in the large biographic intelligence holdings of community concern, particularly if the

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changes involve conversion to computer systems. The biographic name searching function is identified as an area which might benefit significantly from automation, provided a common approach to recording personal names and certain additional basic identifying data can be adopted.

b. Name Finding activities could be improved through increased understanding resulting from the exchange between agencies (at both the user and system planning levels) of information about the nature and purpose of each other's specialized files as well as the exchange of data files in certain cases and interchange of information on manual and ADP techniques for improving speed and flexibility of response.

c. The Task Team stresses the importance of inter-agency cooperation in all efforts to improve biographic information handling capabilities, particularly in areas such as the National Agency Check complex where there is a heavy, continuous exchange of information. The team recommends that agencies planning to convert large manual biographic indexes to computer-based name searching systems consider adopting a common method of recording personal names and related information. This will facilitate later system linkages and information exchange between agencies and will reduce the number of costly conversions as the agencies approach an integrated system configuration. Annex 2 of the final report contains a proposed approach to

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machine recording of personal names. The team recommends that participants in the National Agency Check (NAC) complex consider the feasibility of using telecommunications links to facilitate the transmission and processing of NAC requests and responses. It also recommends that the agencies consider tying into the LDX (Long Distance Xerography) network to facilitate exchange of biographic intelligence.

d. The Task Team believes that the community could benefit from better coordinated effort in processing and exploitation of source materials, particularly foreign open source scientific and technical publication, and in the production, storage, and retrieval of biographic intelligence derived therefrom, particularly on scientific and military personalities. It recommends that ongoing open source exploitation programs be studied and that a coordinated program using EDP methods be developed to provide machine indexes to the bibliographic data and personality information acquired from open sources.

e. Finally, the Task Team recommends that there be semi-annual seminars to discuss overall progress in the biographic field and to consider specific problem areas. These seminars would be augmented by information to be prepared and distributed by the CODIB Support Staff concerning the characteristics of each major biographic collection, procedures for getting service from each collection, and technical details of automated systems being developed in the biographic intelligence area.

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C. CODIB Comment

1. The Task Team V final report provides an insight into the scope of the biographic intelligence problem and identifies some areas where improved speed and effectiveness could be achieved through interagency cooperation and collaboration in the development of machine processing capabilities. The Task Team's recommendations, however, are not sufficiently comprehensive or powerful to precipitate actions that are likely to produce significant improvements in the time-frame in which improvements are urgently needed.

2. The biographic intelligence area, particularly the Counterintelligence and Security portions, has been subjected to extremely close scrutiny during the last three years and, accordingly, has experienced mounting pressure for change and improvement. The Department of Defense has initiated some of the most sweeping changes as a result of the Secretary of Defense memorandum of 27 May 1965 which directed that a central index of DOD investigations be established, that DOD investigative files be co-located, and that a central National Agency Check (NAC) processing center be established. By May 1966, the Army and Navy punched card Counterintelligence and Security name indexes had been converted to a common punched card format and installed in the Defense Central Index of Investigations (DCII), Fort Holabird, Maryland. The Air Force is converting

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its manual 3x5 card index to the adopted format and transferring it to the DCII. Upon completion of the Air Force conversion program, DOD will have a machineable central index of approximately 20 million records to serve as a base for development of computer name searching capabilities and a system of automated National Agency Check processing, including the electrical transmission of name check requests and responses in machineable form. On 18 August 1966, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed that each of the Military Department's investigative headquarters be connected to the DCII by Automatic Digital Network (AUTODIN) no later than 1 January 1967. Meanwhile, some use will be made of standard card transceiver equipment.

3. The DCII is the result of a very strong management action which cut across traditional lines of authority and operating procedures. The DCII is not yet a fully developed, smoothly functioning system; however, there are no apparent technical obstacles to the achievement of such status. The DCII's machineable index is a flexible base which will facilitate the development of a wide range of new capabilities including a fully automated DOD National Agency Check system, computer name searching of the central index, and the automatic generation of management information. Major changes and improvements in the system can be made with relative ease and economy because the index can be machine processed.

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4. The Task Team points out that while several agencies are in the process of developing automated name searching systems, no major name index in the intelligence community has yet been fully automated and, therefore, proof of success has not been conclusively demonstrated. This statement, although true for the intelligence community, ignores the existence of automated name searching systems in other parts of Government and in industry. These systems have demonstrated conclusively that automated name searching is practical and does constitute a significant improvement over manual methods. The National Driver Register Service (NDRS), operated by the Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Commerce, is an example of an operational automated name searching system which is producing good results economically. The NDRS operates on an index of approximately 900,000 names of persons whose driver permits have been revoked because of convictions for drunken driving or accidents involving fatalities; it serves the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Canal Zone. The NDRS receives approximately 800 reports of driver permit revocations per day. It receives an average of 45,000 name search requests per day and provides responses within 24 hours at an overall cost of less than six cents per search. The system is maintained on an IBM 7010 and two IBM 1401's; all processing is accomplished on the night shift.

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The demonstrated effectiveness of the NDRS has resulted in a decision to expand the system and add new capabilities. The U.S. Secret Service has recently installed a Honeywell 1200 computer in order to improve its capability to respond to requirements for biographic data, particularly on persons who may be a threat to the President. This development resulted largely from the impetus supplied by the recommendations of the Warren Commission.

5. The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) has stressed the importance of community action in the biographic intelligence area. Accordingly, biographics comprise an important part of the Community On-Line Intelligence System (COINS) experiment, and the participating agencies have agreed to make available five files containing biographic data as follows:

- NSA - Soviet Scientific and Technical Personality File
- NSA - Soviet Military Personality File
- DIA - Military Personalities File
- CIA - Soviet Elite Dossier File
- CIA - Soviet Elite Travel File

However, this is a relatively restricted effort in the Positive Intelligence area and does not contribute significantly to advancement of capabilities in the Counterintelligence and Security areas. Beyond the COINS experiment, there are no interagency development projects in biographic intelligence, although CIA's Project CHIVE and DIA's Project ANSRS promise

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important advances in the art of handling information including biographics. Given strong management decisions and impetus to proceed with the development of improved interagency biographic intelligence capabilities, existing information processing technology could be used to achieve almost immediate improvement in the handling of Counterintelligence and Security biographic data. For example, a fully automated, quick response National Agency Check (NAC) system could be developed now with existing hardware and software technology if the agencies concerned were to agree on the urgency of such development.

6. The Task Team states that there are "profound, complex problems, and significant costs" involved in making major changes in biographic holdings, particularly if the changes involve conversion to a computer system. This statement tends to exaggerate the problems of file conversion and seems to be an argument for the status quo. File conversion is a costly undertaking; however, costs can be minimized by such actions as converting only new information being added to the file after an established cut-off date, purging the file of inactive material before starting the conversion, and selecting only high-use portions of the file for conversion. If the Task Team is correct in its estimate that the present Counterintelligence and Security files will double in size within the next 11 years, positive steps must be taken to develop more effective and economical methods of

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handling the files. The problems and costs of developing these new methods and converting files are not likely to diminish significantly below present levels. There is good reason, therefore, for initiating improvements now.

7. CODIB believes there are a significant number of actions that should be initiated now to improve both present and long range capabilities in the biographic intelligence area. These actions include such items as the use of data communications linkages to speed the flow of Counterintelligence and Security name check requests and responses, adoption of standard data elements, codes and formats to facilitate conversion of selected files from manual to machine form, detailed planning for the long range development of biographic intelligence handling systems, and close supervision of the biographic portion of the COINS experiment. Although some improvement in the biographic area can be achieved by bilateral agreements and actions, the really significant work requires coordinated effort by all Federal agencies which maintain and process biographic files including such non-intelligence organizations as Immigration and Naturalization Service, Civil Service Commission, and Secret Service. Guidance and impetus for this work must be provided by the Director of Central Intelligence and the United States Intelligence Board. The rate at which files are growing and the number of independent developments getting underway underscore the urgency of initiating improvement actions as soon as possible.

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D. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. USIB note the attached final report of Task Team V.
2. Establish as a priority USIB objective the development of an automated National Agency Check (NAC) system by the end of FY 1970, and in connection therewith:
 - a. Request participation of Secret Service, Civil Service Commission, and Immigration and Naturalization Service in this endeavor.
 - b. Direct CODIB to coordinate the preparation of a time-phased development plan by 1 July 1967.
 - c. Request agencies in the NAC system to collaborate under CODIB cognizance in adopting standard biographic data elements, codes, and formats and prescribe those which should be mandatory and those which could be optional preparatory to conversion of files.
 - d. Request the NAC agencies to begin as soon as possible the preparation of all new biographic index file entries in machine language in conformance with USIB policy as stated in Attachment A to USIB-D-39.5/15, 3 August 1962.
 - e. Request the NAC agencies to begin now to study and adopt methods of converting their existing manual biographic index files to machine language and to develop time-phased plans for the conversion of pertinent records to be completed by the end of FY 1970.

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3. Request the NAC agencies to establish communications links with each other and install the necessary equipment (e.g., card transceivers) by the end of CY 1967 to exchange name check requests and responses in machine language as an interim measure to speed up the NAC process prior to the establishment of an automated NAC system; and in connection therewith request the NAC agencies to collaborate under CODIB in developing formats and procedures for transmission of requests and responses in machine language.

4. Approve extension of the secure Long Distance Xerography (LDX) network to include, as a minimum, stations at DIA (Arlington Hall) and FBI, in addition to those now at CIA, NSA, State, Pentagon, and the White House, to facilitate the exchange of substantive biographic information as well as textual information in other categories.

5. Direct CODIB in collaboration with the agencies concerned to develop for USIB consideration a meaningful and mutually supportive allocation of responsibilities for processing, exploitation, and production in the foreign positive intelligence biographic area (including, but not limited to, the exploitation of foreign open source publications for positive biographic information) and the maintenance of biographic data bases as intelligence community resources.

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6. Request the USIB agencies to review and monitor carefully their commitment of foreign positive intelligence biographic files to the COINS experiment so as to assure selection and maintenance of active files that will be continuously responsive to the needs of the intelligence community for current foreign positive biographic intelligence.

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